

SPECIAL

COLLEC.

WESLEYANA

BW401

.E96

**AN EXPOSURE**  
OF THE  
**MISREPRESENTATIONS & CALUMNIES**  
OF  
**DR. WARREN, MR. THOMPSON,**  
AND OTHERS,

DELIVERED

**AT A MEETING**

HELD IN THE NEW CONNEXION SCHOOL-ROOMS, SHELTON,

*Staffordshire Potteries,*

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, APRIL 16, 1835;

BEING

**A REPORT**

OF THE

**PROCEEDINGS AT A MEETING**

HELD

*In the Wesleyan Chapel, Hanley,*

**STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES,**

APRIL 28th, 1835.

---

**Burslem :**

Printed and Sold by R. Timmis, Bookseller; Sold also by  
J. Mason, 66, Paternoster-Row, London; and by all  
other Booksellers.

**PRICE THREE-PENCE.**

B W 401  
E 96

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

A NUMBER of friends who were present at the Meeting held in the Wesleyan Chapel, Hanley, on the 28th of April, and others who had not an opportunity of attending, having expressed a strong desire to possess a copy of the speeches delivered on that occasion, the speakers have been requested to furnish the substance of their addresses, which, with the aid of two reports taken on the spot, are now presented to the public. We do not pledge ourselves to verbal accuracy, but are confident the report will be found, on the whole, a faithful portraiture of the Meeting.

*Burslem, May 4, 1835.*

Wes. 1561

## REPORT, &c. &c.

---

THE Meeting was opened with singing and prayer, at the close of which the Rev. THOS. HARRIS, the superintendent of the Circuit, introduced the object of the meeting. I regret the cause which has rendered our meeting necessary; I stand before you under circumstances different to those in which I usually appear as your minister. It is my delight to direct your attention to the great subjects connected with your salvation; to warn sinners of their danger, and direct believers in the paths of righteousness. Happy should I have been if there had been no occasion for me to step out of the clear line of ministerial duty. But the system of Wesleyan Methodism having been most unwarrantably assailed, I feel it incumbent upon me to step forward, with other friends, in its defence. But this was no new thing, because Methodism had been attacked from its beginning, and Mr. Wesley and others came forward and rebutted the charges preferred against it. To my mind it appears that Methodism is peculiarly of God, designed for the purpose of reviving pure and scriptural Christianity. Yet notwithstanding the glorious results which had attended its progress, it has lately been assailed with the most bitter invectives, its objects misrepresented, the character and motives of its ministers traduced. A common complaint against the system now is, that it is not in accordance with the principles of religious liberty. I consider that there ought to be no compulsion over any person's belief. Man is a moral agent, and therefore only accountable to God for his religious opinions; therefore I cannot approve of pains and penalties for non-compliance with any religious system. But there is this essential difference to be observed between punishment for non-conformity, and the exercise of discipline in the Methodist community. The entrance into the latter is voluntary; no person is obliged to become a member; and it is supposed that every one, before entering, approves the system, has investigated the rules, and determined to comply with them. Having once entered, they have no right to raise contention; they ought to make it their principal duty to let their light shine before men, and to go about doing good. I hold in my hand pamphlet, calculated to disturb the harmony and prosperity of the Methodist Society in this place. [It was a reprint of the report of the Manchester Association Meeting, held at the Bethesda School-rooms, Shelton, on the 15th of April.] In this pamphlet the character and actions of a great body of Christian ministers—men of strict integrity, sterling piety, and undoubted

BW401  
E9L

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

A NUMBER of friends who were present at the Meeting held in the Wesleyan Chapel, Hanley, on the 28th of April, and others who had not an opportunity of attending, having expressed a strong desire to possess a copy of the speeches delivered on that occasion, the speakers have been requested to furnish the substance of their addresses, which, with the aid of two reports taken on the spot, are now presented to the public. We do not pledge ourselves to verbal accuracy, but are confident the report will be found, on the whole, a faithful portraiture of the Meeting.

*Burslem, May 4, 1835.*

Wes. 1561

## REPORT, &c. &c.

---

THE Meeting was opened with singing and prayer, at the close of which the Rev. THOS. HARRIS, the superintendent of the Circuit, introduced the object of the meeting. I regret the cause which has rendered our meeting necessary; I stand before you under circumstances different to those in which I usually appear as your minister. It is my delight to direct your attention to the great subjects connected with your salvation; to warn sinners of their danger, and direct believers in the paths of righteousness. Happy should I have been if there had been no occasion for me to step out of the clear line of ministerial duty. But the system of Wesleyan Methodism having been most unwarrantably assailed, I feel it incumbent upon me to step forward, with other friends, in its defence. But this was no new thing, because Methodism had been attacked from its beginning, and Mr. Wesley and others came forward and rebutted the charges preferred against it. To my mind it appears that Methodism is peculiarly of God, designed for the purpose of reviving pure and scriptural Christianity. Yet notwithstanding the glorious results which had attended its progress, it has lately been assailed with the most bitter invectives, its objects misrepresented, the character and motives of its ministers traduced. A common complaint against the system now is, that it is not in accordance with the principles of religious liberty. I consider that there ought to be no compulsion over any person's belief. Man is a moral agent, and therefore only accountable to God for his religious opinions; therefore I cannot approve of pains and penalties for non-compliance with any religious system. But there is this essential difference to be observed between punishment for non-conformity, and the exercise of discipline in the Methodist community. The entrance into the latter is voluntary; no person is obliged to become a member; and it is supposed that every one, before entering, approves the system, has investigated the rules, and determined to comply with them. Having once entered, they have no right to raise contention; they ought to make it their principal duty to let their light shine before men, and to go about doing good. I hold in my hand pamphlet, calculated to disturb the harmony and prosperity of the Methodist Society in this place. [It was a reprint of the report of the Manchester Association Meeting, held at the Bethesda School-rooms, Shelton, on the 15th of April.] In this pamphlet the character and actions of a great body of Christian ministers—men of strict integrity, sterling piety, and undoubted

usefulness, has been traduced. It is true we are men of like passions with others, and therefore liable to err—and particular actions was fair subjects of opinion—they may be judicious or otherwise; but when any man sets himself to impute improper motives to, or traduce the character of those who stood in the situation of ministers of the gospel, he wounded them in the most tender part, and does incalculable injury both to us as individuals, and to our ministrations. They then might say, "He who steals my purse, steals trash," &c. In what light can I stand before my hearers in this sanctuary, if they believed the foul statements which had been made of the body of ministers to which I belong? My word cannot, under such circumstances, do good; for I might as well preach to the wind, as to those who hold me in light esteem. I consider the report which has been published, likely to do much mischief, and I therefore agreed with a number of friends to hold this meeting, in order to expose and correct among our own people, what had been set forth. In taking this step, we have nothing to do with the character of our opponents, neither will we interfere with motives—those belonged to God. What we have to do on this occasion is to vindicate our own characters and society, by plain facts and arguments.—[In concluding his address, the Rev. Gentleman called upon Mr Enoch Keeling to take the chair.]

Mr. KEELING said—My Christian Friends,—On introducing the business of this meeting, I shall first read the hand bill which has called us together this evening—

"*Wesleyan Chapel, Hanley.*—The members of the Wesleyan Society, seat-holders, and regular hearers in the Wesleyan Chapels, are respectfully informed that a Public Meeting will be held in the Wesleyan Chapel, Hanley, this Evening, Tuesday, 28th instant, at seven o'clock, for the purpose of answering and refuting the calumnies and falsehoods made by certain members of the Manchester Association, at a meeting lately held in the Bethesda School-Rooms, Shelton, and since published; and to explain and defend the principles and rules of the Wesleyan polity. Members of the Wesleyan Society will be admitted by showing their tickets, and seat holders and hearers may obtain tickets of admission by applying at the Vestry room from six to seven o'clock. Any members of the Wesleyan society will be permitted to ask questions for information, or deliver his sentiments under the direction of the chair. "THOS. HARRIS.

"*Burslem, April 28, 1835.*

"NO COLLECTION."

Mr. Keeling proceeded—You are most of you (if not all) aware, that about a fortnight ago the Bethesda School-rooms, belonging to the Methodist New Connexion, were *kindly lent* to Dr. Warren and his associates, for the purpose of holding a public meeting, at which several speeches were delivered of the most violent and inflammatory character, which contained numerous charges against the Methodist Conference, as a body, and several Methodist ministers as individuals, and which have since been circulated by means of the press. I shall not stop to remark upon the *propriety* or *impropriety* of the trustees of the New Connexion schools lending their premises for such a purpose; (Hear, hear,) but this I will say, that if I should hear of some half dozen gentlemen travelling about the country, whose avowed object was to "*rip up*" the Methodist New Connexion, and be told that they wanted

to hold forth in this chapel, I should, without hesitation, say *No*, (Cheers, and cries of *No, No,*) and I believe my co-trustees would give the same answer. (Cries of *Yes, Yes*) Now as the charges there preferred, and the remarks made were calculated to bring Wesleyan Methodism, and especially the preachers, into disrepute, and to disturb and injure the minds of our numerous societies in this neighbourhood, (for I may here observe that the Wesleyan Methodists have united with them in church fellowship in the Potteries, Newcastle, and the villages adjacent, three thousand persons—who, when added to the regular hearers within the same precincts, make at least ten thousand souls who unitedly worship God in our sanctuaries;) I say, as the proceedings at that meeting had a direct tendency to injure Wesleyan Methodism, from the gross attacks made upon the whole system, and as its advocates were not then allowed to defend it, we are this evening met to hear what the friends of the *good old cause* have to say on its behalf. (Cheers.) I beseech you to hear them patiently; several persons (ministers and lay-gentlemen) well acquainted with the subject, will be called upon to address the meeting; and afterwards, as is stated in the hand-bill, “any member of the Wesleyan society will be allowed to ask questions for information, or deliver his sentiments, under the direction of the chair.” I trust the result of this meeting will be the removal of prejudice, and the establishment of truth, (for “*truth and day-light*” is our motto,) so that we shall have to say at the conclusion, what our venerable founder said just before he finished his earthly pilgrimage, “The best of all is God is with us.” Methodism (it is acknowledged on all hands) has, by the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, been eminently successful in promoting the present and eternal happiness of thousands of our fellow-creatures, both in this and foreign lands; and I should exceedingly regret if anything should be allowed to hinder it in its march of mercy through the world, for I believe it to be admirably calculated to promote “peace on earth, and good-will towards men.” I trust that “Christian charity” will be eminently displayed on this occasion, and that all present will behave with that decorum and propriety so becoming in the house of God.

Mr. HIND, of Tunstall, said, it is grating to the feelings of Christians to wage war on any subject; but it is sometimes necessary to make war, in order that we may have peace; and as Mr. Fletcher once observed, “We have peace in the midst of war,” we have peace in our own consciences. It has been said that “*virtue is its own reward.*” By this I understand that in performing a virtuous action, there is such a sensible pleasure imparted to the mind as of itself, and independent of the future, affords complete satisfaction. If this be true of virtuous actions, the opposite must be true of vicious actions. The bearing of this observation on the business of this evening, will be easily discerned. Accordingly, I feel in my own mind some pleasurable emotions arising out of the reflection, that by the help of God I may be instrumental in rescuing from the merciless hands of the slanderer, those who have been recently exhibited to the pub-



lie as objects of ridicule and scorn. Before I proceed to notice the transactions of the parties just referred to, I beg to be allowed to make a few remarks on the Wesleyan system, which I believe to be as pure and scriptural as any that exists on earth. Mr Wesley, its founder, was a person eminently qualified by natural talent and education, to distinguish truth, and was always ready to act on his convictions; add to this the pains he took in travelling; conversing; reading, and studying, and in prayer to God, with fasting and searching the scriptures, that he might fully know the mind of God; and, if after all, he did not find the truth, every one must acknowledge he took the ready way to it. I believe that Mr. Wesley arrived at the truth, and that he had the guidance of his heavenly Father in founding the Methodist Connexion, and in framing its laws and discipline. Mr. Wesley lived many years to superintend the system which, under God, he had been instrumental in raising; and from all he said and did, became more and more confirmed in the persuasion that he had received his system from God. With a kind of Apostolic authority he used to tell his people that if they would keep the laws, the laws would keep them. (Cheers.) The opinion of Mr. Wesley has been confirmed by thousands of wise and good men, who have known Methodism since his day; and all who look with an impartial eye at the unparalleled success which has attended it, must be compelled to acknowledge that its system contains something more than human power and wisdom. By success I would be understood not to speak merely of the vast numbers it has enrolled as organized members, and of the yet greater numbers it has brought within its influence as constant hearers; but in connection with these considerations, I refer to the salutary moral changes it has effected in thousands of immortal beings, whose understanding it has subdued to truth, whose habits it has subdued to rectitude, and whose heart it has subdued to happiness. Nothing like it has been witnessed since the days of the Apostles. (Hear, hear.) These observations are not intended to be understood as implying the absolute infallibility of its constitution; but we think these of some weight, when taken in connection with its assumed scriptural character. And so far as we can trace out the Apostolic form of church government, it is strictly scriptural. With regard to the power enjoyed, by its ministers, the Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the history of the church during the first three centuries, all clearly show that the ministers of Christ in those days exercised greater powers than had ever been claimed by Methodist preachers. The power possessed by them has proved itself to be of a moral and scriptural kind, and has been used by them chiefly to effect moral and scriptural changes. The changes and revolutions they have been enabled to effect in this way, are now before the world. These changes have every where marked the progress of this work, and of these men, at home and abroad, in countries civilized and uncivilized. I come now to notice the Association Meeting, whose proceedings were abhorrent to the feelings of Christian men. When I first heard of the meeting, I thought it would be

best to treat it with contempt, and that the friends of the Connexion would do well not to honour the meeting with their presence. But some being of opinion that myself and some others ought to attend to watch their proceedings, I went reluctantly, I must say, and took notes of what passed, upon which I shall be able to found my remarks. All I propose in my observations is to give a sort of general sketch of the meeting, a few trial dainties—and the gentlemen who follow will be able to give the whole dish tastily served up. The first speaker I notice, is Mr. Thompson, whose statements were certainly of an astounding character. His first observation of moment was respecting Mr. Wesley's power, which he said was *given* him freely of the people. Those, however, who have read Mr. Wesley's works, know that Mr. Wesley did not rest his power on the will of the people, but considered that he had it from Jesus Christ, as the Great Head of the Church. Beside, Mr. Wesley had an existence, as the founder of Methodism, before the people existed as Methodists; how then could they have given power before they had an existence? To say that the people gave power, is beginning at the wrong end; it makes it to come from below instead of from above. But, in fact, the power possessed by Mr. Wesley, and by every special minister of Christ, is necessarily connected with his office. Therefore, whenever the office is formed, there must be the power also. If this power was useful and indispensable in the days of Mr. Wesley, was it not equally so after he was taken to his reward? Mr. Wesley exercised his power arbitrarily in a certain sense, and if ever there was a period in which arbitrary power might be complained of, it was during his day, for he did whatsoever he would, none daring to say to him, "What doest thou?" By arbitrary power, here I mean, not the abuse of power, a sense too often attached to the phrase, but such a use of power in the hands of an individual, or any number of individuals, as is uncontrolled by any authority but that of God. Such power Mr. Wesley possessed and exercised over those committed to his care; being set "over them in the Lord," having, as he considered, to "watch for their souls as one that must give an account," and it must be allowed that Mr. Wesley used this power wisely. The right of Mr. Wesley to leave his power to the Conference, might naturally be disputed, if it was given him by the people, but as it was given him of God, and inseparable from his office, it was impossible for him to have annihilated the power, unless he could, at the same time, have destroyed the office to which it belongs, which he had neither power nor inclination to do. This power, under certain modifications, is now found in Conference, and, so far as I know, it is exercised in a wholesome manner, for the spiritual and eternal interests of the people. The next observation of this gentleman was on a law which he said, "stamped eternal disgrace" on the Conference. It had reference to the rule made in 1796, to prevent any new course being taken in the Connexion, without the consent of Conference. If there were no factious and ungovernable men, no laws to restrain them would be wanted; but as *unruly* and

*unthinking* men do exist, the law was made for them, and none but such complain of it. It is necessary that care should be taken to prevent such persons from doing mischief. Mr. Thompson proceeded to observe, that "while the preachers affected to give the plan of pacification, they were really intent upon riveting with increased strength, the bondage" of which the people complained. Alas! for the people, if this were really the case; but, blessed be God, the people are not weary of the chain which the preachers are "riveting," it is not an iron galling chain, but a chain of gold; it graces the neck and adorns the hands wherever it is found. (Applause.) Mr. Thompson then went on to observe that "it had often been his lot to withstand the despotic menaces of the preachers to their face; and as frequently had he been overawed by their presence, and as a consequence, acts of the most consummate tyranny had been perpetrated." I come next to Mr. Thompson's illiberal charge of neglect of pastoral duty by the Wesleyan Ministers. He described them as always passing by the doors of the poor—as having no eye to pity, no hand to relieve them! This is a gross falsehood—it is illiberal beyond expression. Do not Methodist ministers relieve the poor? (Cries of Yes, Yes—They do, They do.) Mr. T. with great triumph exclaimed, "Look at Leeds?" and we feel pleasure in looking at Leeds, for prior to the dissensions there, there were but five thousand members, and now there are seven thousand. I must now turn to Mr. Hughes, who, forsooth, complained of the *illiberality* of those who espoused the Methodist cause. This puts me in mind of an anecdote of the celebrated Bunyan, who, before his conversion, was reproved for profane swearing, by one who was in the constant habit of using the foulest expressions, which led Bunyan to observe, "I must be bad indeed when such a person reproves me." And really the proceedings of the Wesleyan's must be notorious indeed, when the members of the Association complain of *illiberality* and abuse. (Laughter.) The language used by Mr. Hughes is so happy that it will, with a reverse, suit my purpose very well. Taking up his own questions, I ask, "Why should *Wesleyan* Methodism be attacked in this angry temper? Why should it be assailed with the meanness that creeps and the venom that crawls? Is this spirit to be reconciled with Christianity? Cannot men differ in opinion without racking up all the filth and scandal they can lay hands upon? Can they not attack measures, without attempting to destroy men? If they are in error, can they not oppose error by truth? If truth is their object, why ruffle their tempers with *false* and *angry* statements?" (Hear, hear.) These are questions which may well be retorted upon the members of the Association, for all these parts they have acted over to a proverb. After asking these questions, Mr. Hughes went on in a systematic, unbroken, harmonious attempt to expose and villify, to abuse and blast, the Methodist ministry. Such studied and laboured defamation, such illiberal slander, such unjust, such unprovoked, such malicious attempts to injure the character of Christian ministers, have seldom been witnessed on any platform in a civilized country.

All this, we are told by this speaker, is done in order to restore peace and harmony! Very proper persons *these* to term *peace-makers*, to *remodel laws*, and give a new system to *Wesleyan Methodism*! The next speaker that addressed the audience was Dr. Warren. After one speaker had given the lie to the Rev. Mr. Jackson, and a second had assailed the veracity of the Rev. John Stevens, the Dr. came forward, and made it appear that the Conference is composed of a number of irreligious, ungodly, designing men. The Dr. after telling the audience that not one word was to be found in the Journals of Conference, of the pretended concessions at Leeds in 1797, which turned out to be a mere figment, a delusion, an ignus fatuus, to decoy the people over bog and ditch, "followed up the statement with the observation," that the printed copies of the Deed were sent among the people to keep them quiet, and thus had the solemn deception succeeded, until they were denied the rights it professed to give. When I reflect on the persons implicated in this charge, I stand confounded. Is it to be believed that Bradford, Pawson, and Mather, Coke, Thompson, and Bradburn, Benson, Moore, and Clarke, all eminent in their day for piety, usefulness, and unquestionable conscientiousness, should conspire to palm a solemn deception upon the people? The statement is not to be credited. It can never be substantiated. Last of all comes Mr. Wallace, who, it should seem, had been reserved for the purpose of producing great effect. He had the misfortune to overstrain his bow, and the consequence was it broke. He appeared, when he first rose, to be a little giddy—certainly he had forgotten himself, and all rules of propriety, as was soon seen by the intemperate observations that escaped him. Yet, however coarse his observations, there were found persons who could relish them. Indeed, so far as my knowledge of the meeting enables me to judge, the coarser the remarks the more greedily they are snatched up and (a voice, "Devoured," Laughter.) "Yes, devoured." This was the case at the meeting alluded to. The applause with which Mr. Wallace was received, induced him to over-step himself. He thought then there was no opposition that durst show itself; he was upon undisputed ground, and he came forward as a warrior. Having told them that he had a little Scotch blood in his veins, and that he had taken hold of the broad-sword, he declared he would never sheath it until the tyrants' heads were brought low. (Expressions of great disgust were general here.) He reminded the meeting of the number of the Associationists, and of their determination to rip up the whole constitution of Methodism. Holding out to view the strength of the Association, he told them that they had six hundred members, and twenty-two local preachers—that they could number already eighty thousand members in the whole, and confidently assured them that they should number one hundred and eighty thousand before Conference next. Having worked himself into a sort of phrensy, he exclaimed with a loud voice, "Cut off the supplies!—starve them out!" (Disapprobation, and cries of Shame, Shame.) Mr. Wallace, at length, so far recovered himself as to recollect that there might possibly be a

little honour and humanity even in that meeting, so he began to anticipate objections. You will some of you say, "it is cruel to cut off the supplies from the Missionaries." What cruelty, said Mr. Wallace, is there in it? And then to justify this unwarrantable measure, he reminded the audience that he had noticed in the Missionary Report some considerable items for the removal of families from the missionary stations to their native land. Then, with impudent hardihood declared, that if God called a man to any missionary station, he ought to leave his bones there, for God would never call him back. Hear this, ye-Methodists—followers of Christ lovers of the heathen world—hear this, all who profess any sense of truth, honour, and justice; no cruelty in cutting off the supplies of missionaries—no cruelty in leaving them unprovided for in a foreign land, after they have given up their all in this. (Hear, hear.) The Associationists have learned some fine lessons. They have learned that eight hundred ministers of Christ are constantly trampling on the understandings and consciences of the people—that they have a right to cut off the supplies from helpless widows and orphans, the relics of those excellent men who have worn themselves out in God's service—that they have a right, by their example and precept, to teach the young to hold in contempt those who ought to be esteemed highly for their work's sake. (Hear, hear.) On the Chapel Fund, Mr. Wallace had the unblushing effrontery to exclaim, "The chapel fund which they (the preachers) tell you is to 'relieve poor chapels,' is, in fact, to relieve poor preachers. Then, with a grinning sneer, repeated, "Their poor preachers, who will have them? London wont have them; Liverpool and Manchester wont have them; the Potteries wont have them; who will have them? These are supported out of your chapel fund. In this way your pennies go,"—making it appear that there is a gross misappropriation of the monies subscribed to these funds, and that the preachers are deceivers! Alas! if all is true that Mr. Wallace has stated—

The Chairman—Did he offer any proof on that point?

Mr. Hind—He did not adduce proof on any point; it was all assertion, and the assertions of those who contradict such statements ought to stand for as much, at least, as the statements themselves. (Hear, hear.) One of the speakers at the meeting amused himself very much by playing off his wit upon the *Watchman* paper, which he said was singularly disqualified for his calling, as he had but one eye. It was still more remarkable that although there were more than seven engaged in the above meeting, there was but one eye present on the occasion. (Laughter.) There was no eye to see the usefulness, the talent, the piety, and the labours of our ministry; no eye to see the revival at Hanley; no eye to see the opening of the new chapel at Tunstall, the three hundred and sixty pounds collected, and the fifty souls converted; no eye to see the thousands of souls in the ranks of Methodism at home and abroad; but every thing calculated to injure, to ruin and blast, was eagerly put forward. (Shame. Shame.) And yet, after all this, we are told that it is unfair to

hold the present meeting, to correct the misstatements made at the former; that we must bear all in silence, though there was a bold challenge given. That challenge was accepted at the very time, and but for the lateness of the evening, and the determination of Dr. Warren's party to put down all discussion, we would even then have had a trial of strength. I was perfectly aware when I stepped on the platform at the Bethesda meeting, that I should quickly be borne down by the strong billows that were rolling about me; but I felt it a duty and a honour to offer opposition, though I was only permitted to shout from beneath the angry surges. In conclusion, allow me to make a remark or two on the new state of things. There will be no peace until there are fewer politicians and legislators. Even the commonest artisan now considers himself capable of undertaking the complicated affairs of church and state. The tailor can cut out work for the ministers. The shoe maker can put the nation on a better footing. The carpenter can square out a better form of government. The bricklayer can place things on a broader and better foundation. And the saddler can fit the saddle on the people much better and easier than it is at present. (Laughter and applause.) For myself I am willing to be governed by those whom Providence has placed over me. If we were all willing to be governed, there would be fewer complaints against our governors. (Much applause.)

The Rev. JOHN WALSH rose and said—I feel, Sir, much regret that there is a necessity for noticing, in this public manner, the statements which have been lately made in another place, and the reports which have been put into circulation, tending to lower the character of the ministry, and to undermine the foundation of the polity of our body. When I see individuals led astray from the paths of truth, by the false statements of misguided men, I feel it a circumstance which calls for Christian sympathy. I envy not the individual his state of mind, who, when he sees dissensions existing, labours to make the breach wider, instead of endeavouring to promote peace and concord. Our object ought to be the promotion of Christian fellowship, rather than the unhallowed triumphs of party. (Hear, hear.) Sir, I would much rather be now employed in directing the attention of this audience to those great truths which form the legitimate themes of the Christian ministry, than to have to notice the errors of men who call themselves Christians; but when attempts are made to degrade the ministers of the gospel, when they are charged with grasping at power which does not belong to the sacred office—with clandestinely altering the very laws by which they profess to be guided—when it is alleged that they act in an arbitrary and tyrannical spirit—when I thus see principle laid prostrate, and truth lie bleeding in the streets—reason invites, gratitude calls, justice demands, truth requires me to use those means which are in my power, to stop the moral plague, and to disabuse the minds of our people, the younger portion in particular, who may have credited the unfounded calumnies which had been lately uttered (Cheers.) I do not intend, Sir, to make a speech;

my principal object will be to refute statements made by certain gentlemen at the Bethesda school-room, and to show that those statements are not *facts* but *fictions*. On the truth of those statements they have risked the merits of their cause, and I pledge myself to show that the greater part of them are utterly false. I shall begin with the speech of a Mr. Thompson, and take it part by part, and show that there is no truth in it. (Hear, hear.)

1. Mr. Thompson said, "they were frequently told that the Association was composed of none but outcasts; he stood before them an expelled brother." Thus, at the onset, he endeavoured to excite the sympathy of his hearers. But, Sir, if I may judge of the temper and conduct of the man by his speech, I should certainly say, there were substantial reasons for separating him from the society. Judging of the man by his speech, I should say he has *no claim* on our sympathy. (Hear, hear.)

2. Mr. Thompson went on to say, if they had continued to *pray* and *pay*, all would have been right. Mark this! Let the meeting mark the statement just read. What was this but saying that the Methodist ministers would tolerate any improper conduct, if it were only covered with the garb of religion, and attended with pecuniary support. (Shame, shame.) Let the members of the Methodist Connexion hear it! It is here insinuated by an advocate of the Association, that it matters not to your ministers what are the doctrines you believe; it matters not what may be the inconsistency of your conduct; it matters not how unsound your principles—only '*pray* and *pay*,' and all will be well. Base and calumnious insinuation! (Cheers.) Never will I be found in association with such a ministry; and if such a state of things existed among the Wesleyan ministers, I would be one of the first to exclaim, "Cease your support—cease to be members of such an unhallowed community." (Cheers.) It might be said that what I am now saying was mere declamation, but I appeal to the members of our society, whether their ministers be the men to wink at moral delinquency for the sake of *pay* and *prayer*. (Loud cries of No, No.) I appeal to the young. (Cheers.) I appeal to those in the meridian of life. (Cheers.) I appeal to the aged, who have so long sat beneath the word, and under whose inspection the conduct of so many of my brethren must have passed. (Continued cheers.) I appeal to all if the insinuation be not calumniously vile and atrociously false. (Loud applause.)

3. Mr. Thompson went on to observe, that if they began to evince a disposition for the correction of abuses, they were viewed as dangerous men. Why, Sir, this is begging the question, this is the point to be proved. Correction of abuses! Nothing is more common than to hear of the abuses of government from those who are placed under its salutary restraints. A thief, when sitting in his gloomy cell, and rattling his chains, will no doubt discover great abuses in the administrations of justice. (Laughter.) A child looks upon the rod by which he has been corrected, as an abuse. It was common for men whose conduct had placed them under the wholesome correction of the law, to inveigh against the power which enforced, and the agents who



had administered it. (Cheers.) But, Sir, if abuses do exist in our body, is there not piety, is there not talent, is there not integrity enough among ourselves to correct them? Need we go to the members of the self-constituted association to set us right?

4. Mr. Thompson proceeded to say, "It is now a long time since peace reigned in our borders. Not, he believed, since the death of Wesley, had the society been free from dissensions, and he could challenge contradiction to the assertion, that in every instance it had originated in the ministers grasping at undue power." This, Sir, is an historic falsehood—one which would be scouted by any man who had given himself the trouble to read and examine. This statement looked two ways. While Mr. Wesley lived, it appeared, on this gentleman's authority, there was nothing but peace in the Connexion; but that since, there had been little else but confusion. Now what is the fact. I have to-day been at the trouble of looking over the records of the body, and I find there were double the number of dissensions before Mr. Wesley's death, to those which have taken place since that event. (Hear, hear.) Then it is said, the dissensions which have taken place since Mr. Wesley's death, had all "originated in the preachers grasping at undue power." And is this true? No, Sir, it is false. (Hear, hear.) What originated the disputes in 1795? Was it the preachers grasping at power? No: it was a difference of opinion among the members of the Connexion, as to the administration of the sacraments in the Wesleyan chapels, and by the Wesleyan ministers. Many of the people wished to have the sacraments administered by their own preachers, while the trustees, who in general, had strong leanings to the Established Church, would not consent to it. Now to the disgrace of those who would blast the characters of the excellent ministers of that day, be it known, that in general they took sides with the *people*, who thus gained the object they had in view. (Loud applause.) Much had been said respecting the Leeds case. "Look at Leeds" it has been said; and I say look at Leeds. What was the origin of the dissensions there? Was it the preachers grasping at power? No; the unpleasantness arose as they all knew, from the proposition for an organ to be placed in one of the chapels. But who wished for it? The ministers? No! The trustees, the majority of the seat-holders, and, I believe, the greater part of the leaders worshipping at that chapel, were the persons from whom the request came. (Cheers.) And what had originated the late proceedings in Manchester? Was it the ministers *grasping* at power? No! it was the exercise of discipline, not in reference to any of the *people*, but on one of their own body. (Loud applause.) An exercise of discipline which had been justified by the highest judicial authority in the state. The men who charge the present race of Methodist ministers with this ungovernable passion for power, pretend to point to the venerated Wesley as an example of humility, and as being distinguished by an anxious desire to meet the wishes of his people; yet it was a well known fact that Mr. Wesley possessed much greater power over the societies than his successors have ever



claimed for themselves. Abuse was heaped upon him for exercising the power he possessed—he was frequently denominated *Pope*, &c. but he bore it with meekness, and with firm Christian principle he resisted the attempts of factious men to disturb the peace of his societies. 5. Mr. Thompson proceeded to say, “The constitution of Methodism was composed of two parts—the preachers and the people. The people had built their chapels, had paid the expences of supporting a ministry, and for *many years* had acted in such a manner as had excited the admiration of many, and the surprise of more. But while they were doing this, the ministers were not idle, for they continued to *get* the power to govern, in a manner so absolute, that in 1795 the complaints became so loud from the people, that the Conference began to negotiate the matter, and the ‘Law of Pacification’ arose out of the dissensions.” For *many years*, says this gentleman, the people continued to do well, and the preachers to do ill, which originated the plan of pacification; and *how many years* think you were these proceedings going on? Mr. Wesley died in 1791, and the plan of pacification came out in 1795; so that Mr. Thompson’s *many years* dwindle down to *four*. (Cheers.) And during this time the “Ministers were not idle.” No; the preachers were not idle! They were traversing the country in the length and breadth of it, preaching morning, noon, and night, the unsearchable riches of Christ. (Cheers.) ‘They were not ‘idle,’ for their *circuit*s in that day resembled the *district*s of this, extending forty, fifty, or sixty miles. Such were the fields of labour in which the best energies were spent of many of the departed servants of God, whose characters are now blasted by those who owe to them their all. (Cheers.) Were the Pawsons, the Mathers, the Cokes, the Thompsons, the Bradburns, the Bensons, the Moors, the Clarkes, the Taylors, of those days, the men to busy themselves in getting power to oppress their people? I have already shown that the plan of pacification had a different origin from that assigned to it by *this* Mr Thompson. 6. The next point in Mr. T.’s speech which I shall notice, is the observations made on the law of 1796, prohibiting unauthorised meetings. We should look to what might be called the preamble of that law—

“Q. 29. What can be done to prevent unthinking men from disturbing our people?”

“A. Let no man, or number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing *new*, till it has been first appointed by Conference.”

This law has been pronounced “a disgrace to our statute book.” Why, Sir, these very individuals, a few months ago, said that the law had been blotted out of our statute book, by the concessions of 1797—but *now* it appears to serve their purpose to say, it is still in force. (Laughter.) I will admit at once, that the law, as it stands here, is not calculated to suit a sickly liberalism, but it is one which, in substance, is essential to the well-being of the Connexion. This law had been described as only “fit to be issued to the boors of Russia;” and to obtain support for his as-

section, care had been taken to keep out of sight the explanation given of its meaning, by those who framed it. But if the rule must be commented upon with such severity, the explanation should also be given. It is as follows:—

“4. As the committee above mentioned requested also, that the Minutes of the last Conference concerning the calling of meetings, to consider the affairs of the Society or Connexion, be explained; and as we are exceedingly desirous of preserving the peace and union of the whole body, we have agreed upon the following explanation, viz. :—

(1) As the Leaders' meeting is the proper meeting for the society, and the quarterly meeting for the circuit, we think that other formal meetings, in general, would be contrary to the Methodist economy, and very prejudicial in their consequences. But,

(2) In order to be as tender as possible, consistently with what we believe to be essential to the welfare of our societies, we allow, that other formal meetings may be held, if they first receive the approbation of the superintendent, and the Leaders' or quarterly meeting; provided also that the superintendent, if he please, be present at every such meeting.”

Will this law, with its accompanying explanation, be deemed by this assembly only fit for the boozes of Russia? Let us suppose that in the Hanley society any leader or member had the power to call meetings whenever he felt the disposition, meetings might be called perpetually on trifling, and perhaps injurious business; and then they would have little else but confusion. It was necessary there should be a check in this matter, and the law referred to supplied it. There were persons who talked much of “religious liberty,” but it would be found that in the lips of by far the greater part of those who used it, the phrase was mere cant. (Hear, hear.) Is religious liberty, I ask, a permission for every man to do what is right in his own eyes? If a man wished for unrestrained liberty, let him go at once to the back settlements of America, (Laughter,) where he might have his notions of liberty acted out; but if he must enjoy conventional advantages, he must conform to the rules of the institution which conferred them. (Loud applause.) Whatever might be the institution, whether a sick club, or an annuity society, or a religious community, it was essential that its regulations should be observed, before it could be of utility. (Cheers.) 7. Next Mr. Thompson affirms that “those who looked at Methodism thirty-five years ago, must reluctantly admit that modern Methodism was illegitimate.” This gentleman seems to have no fixed opinion as to the time of Methodistical legitimacy. In the commencement of his speech he speaks of the death of Mr. Wesley, as the time when the glory departed; but now we are told to look back only *thirty-five* years, and we shall see her then in her primitive simplicity! Is it not strange, if the evil complained of be the power of the preachers, that Methodism should become illegitimate during the time they were making the greatest concessions to the people? While Mr. Wesley lived, all the finances, as well as the spiritual affairs of the Connexion, were under his entire control; but since his death, yea, since 1800, the management of pecuniary matters have been chiefly in the hands of Laymen. Not a single sixpence of the public money is now expended, but in connection with lay-superintendency. Yes, Sir, and the individual whose character

has been attacked by slander and falsehood—who has been maligned and ridiculed—I mean Dr. Bunting—(Cheers) was always foremost in advocating the just rights of the people.

The Rev. THOMAS PINDER—"I can give my solemn testimony to that fact." (Cheers.)

Mr. JERVIS—"What is Mr. Bunting's salary? (Hisses.)

Mr. Walsh—"The same as mine. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Jervis said he asked because he had heard that it was extravagantly large. He did not believe it, and therefore wished the people to know.

Mr. Walsh explained.—Mr. Bunting's salary is the same as the other London preachers, and were it not for his own private property, he could not support his present station in society. The question just asked reminds me of a circumstance which took place a short time ago near Bristol. A member of society being asked by the preachers what he would give to the yearly collection, replied that he thought he should give nothing this year, for he understood that Jabez Bunting had sold all the Methodists to government for eight thousand pounds. (Great laughter.) 8. I now come to the Nantwich Journal. Mr. Thompson said, "That in the Nantwich circuit, a journal was kept by the superintendent, in which the names and measures of individuals, favourable to certain reforms, were enrolled, and they were thus marked men for the guidance of future preachers." Now what is the fact? The Chairman, Brother Powell, and myself, have enquired into this matter, and find that no such book is in existence.

Mr. POWELL—And farther, there was not even a book containing a list of the officers of the society, when the present superintendent came to the circuit.

The Chairman—"There actually did not exist a book containing a list of officers. [This statement drew forth from the meeting strong expressions of disapprobation of Mr. Thompson, with triumphant cheers for the truth.]

Mr. Walsh continued—9. Mr. Thompson next charged the Methodist ministers with neglecting the poor, and treating them with contempt, and being habitually found in the carpeted rooms of the wealthy. Why, Sir, we are eminently the ministers of the poor. My worthy colleague had said, on one occasion, and I concur in the sentiment, that it will be a dark day for Methodism, if her ministers should ever cease to feel that they were mainly dependant for their support on the pence of the poor. For myself I will say, that I would rather spend an hour with a poor man possessed with piety, than five minutes with a rich man of an opposite character. I have travelled twenty-one years, and I can state, that during that time I have never neglected to call on every poor family with which I was acquainted, where we had a member. (Much applause.) I will appeal to the Tunstall friends present. Do we neglect and despise the poor? (Loud cries of No, No.) There are not many 'carpeted rooms' in Tunstall; I speak not with disrespect; the bulk of our members are plain people, although they have erected a chapel which would do honour even to London. (Cheers.) But though there are not

many 'carpeted rooms,' we visit you, and should visit you more, did not your constant employment prevent it. 10. We now come again to Leeds. "The Conference, (says Mr. Thompson,) by their dangerous and despotic measures, had driven from the society a thousand of its most efficient members. If fine chapels, splendid organs, rich congregations, with back doors to their chapels for the admission of the pious poor; if these were tests of prosperity, and marks of Divine favour, then he would concede the point; but if they were known to exist with a low state of religion, and were in many cases intimations of the form without the power, then he would take up the watch-word and say, 'Look at Leeds.'" Now, Sir, I will give you the opinion of the Rev. Daniel Isaac, of these "thousand most efficient members." Mr. Isaac, the advocate of liberal measures, the advocate of religious liberty, who, I believe, held opinions in politics extremely liberal, approaching those termed 'Radical.' His opinion was, that the Leeds dissentients were not justified in separating, and that their conduct was notoriously inconsistent. After advocating the cause of these dissentients at the London Conference, where their case occupied the deliberations of the preachers six days, Mr. Isaac was appointed to Leeds, where he had an opportunity of a personal observation of the men and their doings. Much weight was to be attached to the sentiments of this gentleman, because of the popularity of himself and his views, with the class of persons whose conduct is now under our notice. Here, then, Mr. Isaac's deliberate judgment. "Whatever the errors of the preachers might be, he was satisfied they were errors of the judgment, and not of the heart; and not of sufficient magnitude to justify a separation from the Connexion. He gave the complainants, too, credit for their assertions, that their opposition to an organ was the dictate of conscience; and that their minds were fully made up not to make a division. Upon both these latter points his charity was soon obliged to give up the ghost. He was astonished when he was assured that the dissentients had an organ in one of their chapels near Leeds. By way of apology for this piece of inconsistency, he was informed that the organ at Brunswick chapel was opposed, not on its own account merely, but because it was viewed as the precursor of the *liturgy*. It was soon whispered that they had granted to their London friends the use of the *liturgy*. He was very much stunned with the sound of the organ at Burley; but he was not prepared to give his assent to this report; he thought that even impudence must have some limits, and that they could not go quite so far as to make a conscientious dread of the *liturgy* a pretence for their separation, and immediately enacted its use in their own communion. A sight of the rules, however, soon banished all delusion, and it was found they had adopted the *liturgy* as well as the organ—the two terrible scare-crows which frightened them from the Old Connexion. When he considered how he had been imposed upon by their hypocrisy; how many precious souls had been led astray by their impious libels on his brethren, he considered it due to himself and to the church of Christ, to testify his abhor-

rence of their principles, and to show that they were fighting against God's word, as well as against his ministers." We see what was the conduct of these people when separated from us. They left us on account of the introduction of an organ into a chapel in which few of them ever worshipped, and the first chapel they occupied contained an organ. (Loud cheers and laughter.) "Oh! but," said they, "we were afraid the liturgy would be introduced;" and, would it be believed, at their first yearly meeting they granted the use of the liturgy to the congregations in London. (Much laughter.) So much for the Leeds case. Mr. Dawson had lately been in the neighbourhood, and stated that there never was more piety, zeal, and self-denying effort in Leeds, than at the present time. (Cheers.) With respect to the charge alleged against Methodism in Leeds, that it consists in chapels and splendid organs, with back doors for the pious poor. There is but one organ in Leeds, the chapels are not finer than are to be found in other places, and there are no back doors expressly for the poor. Why, Sir, there is a back door in this chapel, one at Burslem, another at Tunstall, but who ever thought of making this a charge against our people in these places? An attempt has been made to show that the Conference was endeavouring to force organs and the liturgy upon the people. If so, how is it that in all the Potteries there is not an organ or a chapel in which the liturgy is used?

Mr. Pinder—We have two back doors at Newcastle, (great laughter,) but we are all poor.

Mr. Harris—Since Mr. Dawson was in this neighbourhood, I have seen him elsewhere, and he stated to me, that their last quarterly meeting at Leeds had been one of the most delightful and profitable of any within his recollection. Formerly they were debating until seven o'clock on temporal matters, but at this meeting they had done with that department of business by half-past three o'clock, and spent the rest of the time in spiritual conversation and prayer. (Applause.)

Mr. Walsh continued—While on the subject of Leeds, I will diverge for a moment to the speech of a Mr. Hughes, at the late meeting—the gentleman who talked of "the meanness that creeps and the venom that crawls." Mr. H. described the noble and praiseworthy efforts of our brethren at Leeds, in the erection of the last new chapel, as resembling the "barons of old, who endeavoured to wipe away their guilty stains by deeds of charity." Let this be remembered! The free-will offerings of the people of God to erect a sanctuary for their worship, was compared to the conduct of men who used to found churches, and other religious houses, to expiate deeds of blood. (Same—Cheers.) Here indeed we have "the meanness that creeps and the venom that crawls." (Loud cheers.) What will this assembly think when I tell them that three thousand of the members now in the Leeds societies, were not in existence as members when the separation took place; and that a large sum had been contributed by the poor, and those who took no part in the affairs of the separation. (Applause.)

Mr. Harris—The poor themselves raised a thousand pounds to that chapel. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Walsh—My spirit, Sir, is deeply grieved to think that any man who had *ever been* a Methodist, should have uttered such a slander. I hate falsehood. Truth and day light is our motto. (Cheers.) 11. I shall now return to the speech of Mr. Thompson. He had charged Mr. Sugden, the superintendent of the Northwich circuit, with quibbling. I have written to Northwich, and I hold in my hand Mr. Sugden's explanation, corroborated by his colleague, Mr. Jackson. What Mr. Thompson called a requisition, was no requisition, but a string of resolutions, with not a single name attached to it: and would the meeting credit the fact, that the resolutions were those of the central association, including the recommendation to stop supplies? (Shame, shame) Mr. Sugden did not equivocate, but very properly refused to put them to the meeting. Mr. T. farther said, that he had, in some other instances, taken resolutions to the meeting which the chairman had refused to put. This also Mr. Sugden declares to be false. And yet this Mr. Thompson represents himself as cruelly expelled from a communion which he loves, for no other crime than simply attending a meeting of the Association. Yes, he was put on his trial for attending that meeting, but not for that alone, but for taking a leading part in that meeting, and bringing forward the above resolutions, and expressing his approbation of the principles and proceedings of the Association. It was for disturbing the peace of the society—it was for endeavouring to subvert the good order and proper government of its affairs, that he was expelled. But he says he "was not allowed to defend himself." Certainly he was so long as he kept to the point, but when he refused to do this, and deviated from the question under the consideration of the meeting, he was stopped. He farther charged Mr. Sugden with saying, "that was not a meeting for discussion," which Mr. S. denies. He says, "this is quite incorrect. I used the words after the expulsion had taken place, to a *mob*, which we have every reason to believe had been brought to the chapel for the purpose of intimidation." Mr. Thompson said also, "that there was but one person spoke to his being at the meeting, and what was very extraordinary there was *none* to speak to the attendance of Brother Wallace." Now, Sir, so far is this from being true, that Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Fowls, and others, were witnesses of Mr. Wallace's being at the meeting, and he had also taken a notorious part in association meetings at Liverpool and Manchester. (Hear, hear.) Besides, these gentlemen, with a number of other leaders, had for a considerable time before their expulsion, introduced the poisonous principles of the association into their classes, and produced such prejudice against the preachers, and the institutions of the Connexion, that many had begun to act upon their recommendation, and stop the supplies. Wallace had been particularly mischievous in slandering the preachers and the Conference throughout the circuit. It was for acts like these, and not simply for *attending* an association meeting, that these individuals were expelled. (Hear, hear.)



rence of their principles, and to show that they were fighting against God's word, as well as against his ministers." We see what was the conduct of these people when separated from us. They left us on account of the introduction of an organ into a chapel in which few of them ever worshipped, and the first chapel they occupied contained an organ. (Loud cheers and laughter.) "Oh! but," said they, "we were afraid the liturgy would be introduced;" and, would it be believed, at their first yearly meeting they granted the use of the liturgy to the congregations in London. (Much laughter.) So much for the Leeds case. Mr. Dawson had lately been in the neighbourhood, and stated that there never was more piety, zeal, and self-denying effort in Leeds, than at the present time. (Cheers.) With respect to the charge alleged against Methodism in Leeds, that it consists in chapels and splendid organs, with back doors for the pious poor. There is but one organ in Leeds, the chapels are not finer than are to be found in other places, and there are no back doors expressly for the poor. Why, Sir, there is a back door in this chapel, one at Burslem, another at Tunstall, but who ever thought of making this a charge against our people in these places? An attempt has been made to show that the Conference was endeavouring to force organs and the liturgy upon the people. If so, how is it that in all the Potteries there is not an organ or a chapel in which the liturgy is used?

Mr. Pinder—We have two back doors at Newcastle, (great laughter,) but we are all poor.

Mr. Harris—Since Mr. Dawson was in this neighbourhood, I have seen him elsewhere, and he stated to me, that their last quarterly meeting at Leeds had been one of the most delightful and profitable of any within his recollection. Formerly they were debating until seven o'clock on temporal matters, but at this meeting they had done with that department of business by half-past three o'clock, and spent the rest of the time in spiritual conversation and prayer. (Applause.)

Mr. Walsh continued—While on the subject of Leeds, I will diverge for a moment to the speech of a Mr. Hughes, at the late meeting—the gentleman who talked of "the meanness that creeps and the venom that crawls." Mr. H. described the noble and praiseworthy efforts of our brethren at Leeds, in the erection of the last new chapel, as resembling the "barons of old, who endeavoured to wipe away their guilty stains by deeds of charity." Let this be remembered! The free-will offerings of the people of God to erect a sanctuary for their worship, was compared to the conduct of men who used to found churches, and other religious houses, to expiate deeds of blood. (Same—Cheers.) Here indeed we have "the meanness that creeps and the venom that crawls." (Loud cheers.) What will this assembly think when I tell them that three thousand of the members now in the Leeds societies, were not in existence as members when the separation took place; and that a large sum had been contributed by the poor, and those who took no part in the affairs of the separation. (Applause.)

Mr. Harris—The poor themselves raised a thousand pounds to that chapel. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Walsh—My spirit, Sir, is deeply grieved to think that any man who had *ever been* a Methodist, should have uttered such a slander. I hate falsehood. Truth and day light is our motto. (Cheers.) 11. I shall now return to the speech of Mr. Thompson. He had charged Mr. Sugden, the superintendent of the Northwich circuit, with quibbling. I have written to Northwich, and I hold in my hand Mr. Sugden's explanation, corroborated by his colleague, Mr. Jackson. What Mr. Thompson called a requisition, was no requisition, but a string of resolutions, with not a single name attached to it: and would the meeting credit the fact, that the resolutions were those of the central association, including the recommendation to stop supplies? (Shame, shame) Mr. Sugden did not equivocate, but very properly refused to put them to the meeting. Mr. T. farther said, that he had, in some other instances, taken resolutions to the meeting which the chairman had refused to put. This also Mr. Sugden declares to be false. And yet this Mr. Thompson represents himself as cruelly expelled from a communion which he loves, for no other crime than simply attending a meeting of the Association. Yes, he was put on his trial for attending that meeting, but not for that alone, but for taking a leading part in that meeting, and bringing forward the above resolutions, and expressing his approbation of the principles and proceedings of the Association. It was for disturbing the peace of the society—it was for endeavouring to subvert the good order and proper government of its affairs, that he was expelled. But he says he "was not allowed to defend himself." Certainly he was so long as he kept to the point, but when he refused to do this, and deviated from the question under the consideration of the meeting, he was stopped. He farther charged Mr. Sugden with saying, "that was not a meeting for discussion," which Mr. S. denies. He says, "this is quite incorrect. I used the words after the expulsion had taken place, to a mob, which we have every reason to believe had been brought to the chapel for the purpose of intimidation." Mr. Thompson said also, "that there was but one person spoke to his being at the meeting, and what was very extraordinary there was *none* to speak to the attendance of Brother Wallace." Now, Sir, so far is this from being true, that Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Fowls, and others, were witnesses of Mr. Wallace's being at the meeting, and he had also taken a notorious part in association meetings at Liverpool and Manchester. (Hear, hear.) Besides, these gentlemen, with a number of other leaders, had for a considerable time before their expulsion, introduced the poisonous principles of the association into their classes, and produced such prejudice against the preachers, and the institutions of the Connexion, that many had began to act upon their recommendation, and stop the supplies. Wallace had been particularly mischievous in slandering the preachers and the Conference throughout the circuit. It was for acts like these, and not simply for *attending* an association meeting, that these individuals were expelled. (Hear, hear.)



I come now to the case of James Edwards, in giving an account of which Mr. Thompson said that the preacher declared "that he had nothing to do with the scriptures." What was the fact? Mr. Jackson did advise Edwards to have done with the association, and to go on as usual, when he said, "Prove to me from scripture that I have done wrong." Mr. Jackson quoted the words of St. Paul, "Mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17. Mr. Sugden said, "Brother Edwards, we assume it that Methodism is scriptural; the question is, whether you have violated our rules." So far then from the preachers having said that they had nothing to do with scripture; they state their conviction that the rules of Methodism are scriptural, and actually quote this appropriate passage from the writings of St. Paul, '*Mark them which cause divisions.*' (Loud cheers.) I will not detain you much longer, (go on,) but just refer you to Mr. Thompson's statement of the dying leader having sent his class book to Mr. Sugden, stating that he died a member of the association. Mr. S. says, in answer to my enquiries on this subject, this is the *first* I have heard of it. (Loud cries of hear, hear.) 12. Before sitting down, I must notice the charge of Mr. Hughes, as to the alteration of the rule which relates to the expulsion of members. He said, "that the laws of the Connexion had been altered surreptitiously. He had in his hand a copy of the old rules, published in 1800 which had been altered so that the preachers might act according to their own will and pleasure. The old law (of 1800) says that no leader shall be expelled except by a *majority* at a leaders' or quarterly meeting." Here is a charge of gross forgery, in a matter of vital importance, perpetrated for wicked ends. It happens, however, that we are able, by documentary evidence, to prove the charge to be grossly false. I hold in my hand a copy of the rule referred to, published under the sanction of Conference in the year 1797. I will read from the edition of 1797, while Mr. Powell shall read the same rule from the large minutes published in 1812.

Mr. Pinder said he purchased the copy of the minutes then in Mr. Walsh's hand, in the year 1797, at Sheffield, from Mr. Joseph Taylor. He observed, with much emotion, that his heart ached when he heard charges of such a nature brought against such men as Joseph Taylor, John Barber, and Edward Jackson. The first had one of the purest souls that ever dwelt in a mortal body: the second was eminently the friend of the poor, the leanings of both were remarkably that way: and the third, whose ashes lay in a neighbouring church yard, was a most amiable man and greatly beloved. The praises of these men were heard wherever the society was known. (Cheers.) He could bear his testimony, step by step, to the statements of his junior brethren, as to the integrity of Conference; and happy was he to find himself surrounded by men who could so well advocate their cause, in opposition to the shocking charges which had been brought against them by Dr. Warren and his friends. Their motto was, "Truth and day-light" (Applause.)

Mr. Walsh then read the rule referred to, as published by the

Conference in 1797; and Mr. Powell read the same rule from the 8vo. edition of the minutes; they were word for word the same as now found in the class books—"No person shall be expelled for immorality, till such immorality be proved at the leaders' meeting." Mr. Walsh handed the original edition of the rules to Mr. Josiah Wood, who was sitting near the speakers with Mr. Hancock. That gentleman examined this early edition, and expressed his satisfaction that the rule was the same as the recent editions of the minutes, and that it was a genuine copy, which drew forth a peal of applause. Thus was the alleged forgery triumphantly disapproved.

Mr. Walsh continued—I have been much surprised to find that at the late meeting the speakers lost sight of the grand question which had brought out their present leader—the Theological Institution. Not one word was said of it. No; it was not the Theological Institution—this was only the stalking-horse of the party—it was something else, it was a desire to revolutionize the body which caused the present agitation. But as much has been said of the illiberal character and dangerous tendency of this Institution, I will read to you an extract from a published document, which will show that a Theological Institution was one of the reform measures recommended by Alexander Kilham and his friends, in the year 1795: "We are of the same opinion with this (Aberdeen) district last year, that it would be very useful for many pious, promising young men, to be a few months under a proper master, to learn a little of the English grammar, and to pronounce their words properly. If a small academy were appointed near Leeds, or in any populous part of the kingdom, they might supply a number of places, and regularly attend their studies. This would not hinder their piety, but make them abundantly more useful in the vineyard of Christ. We believe many of our friends would cheerfully subscribe to defray the expense." (Hear, hear.) *Methodist Monitor*, vol. 1, page 305. I will not detain the meeting any longer than to remark, that I have no doubt posterity will award to Dr. Warren and his party, a just judgment. When the fumes of popular excitement shall have passed away, wise and good men will not be backward to condemn their proceedings. It was so in Mr. Kilham's case, it will be so in the case of Dr. Warren. What was the judgment of the New Connexion Conference, when they came to reflect calmly on the conduct of their leader—it was this: "He became bewildered in the multiplicity and inaccuracy of his writings. Some of his complaints had the appearance of personal abuse; others as if produced for the purpose of defamation; some of his individual charges were not properly supported, and in some cases general conclusions were made from particular premises, which is certainly a false and unfair mode of reasoning" (See Mr. Kilham's Life, by the President and Secretary of the New Connexion Conference, page 182.) I hope, Sir, it will appear to our people that we have disproved the calumnious statements which have been made; that if they should hear unfavourable reports of the ministers of the Connexion, they will come to us and we will give

them the best information we possess; and that we shall be induced, from the persecutions by which we are assailed, to cling closer to each other and to the cause which I hope is dear to all our hearts (Applause.)

Mr. HANCOCK hoped the speakers would bear in mind that the dying leader referred to by Mr. Walsh, might have *sent* the message, though it had not been received by the superintendent.

Mr Walsh—the superintendent knows nothing about it—my enquiries go no farther.

Mr Powell said, if anything of the kind had taken place, it was strange the superintendent should be ignorant of it, to whom the message was said to have been sent.

Mr JOSIAH WOOD observed, that however he might differ from the speakers on the Deed of Pacification, and their interpretation of it, he was bound in candour to state, that he was perfectly satisfied as to the genuineness of the rule affecting leaders' meetings, and that the printed rule of 1812, was the same as that of 1797. (Continued cheers.)

Mr Pinder bore testimony to the character of Mr Sugden, and spoke of him as a diligent, faithful labourer, and as one who had been imprisoned for the sake of preaching the truth. He (Mr P.) had travelled in Nantwich, Chester, Congleton, Burslem, Leek, Newcastle, Belper, and Ashby, and he would appeal to the people of those circuits whether he deserved the character given of the preachers respecting the poor. He said he had travelled in Leeds two years before the organ question was agitated, and could confirm the statements which had been made at this meeting. When the matter was brought before the Conference, a committee was appointed to go into the case, and as the preachers in general were not favourable to organs, they appointed the late Rev. Richard Watson, who was known to be unfavourable to such instruments in our chapels, as a member of that committee. He was the chairman of that committee, and every attention was paid to the subject, and the parties on both sides expressed themselves satisfied with the treatment they had received.

The Chairman next called upon Mr POWELL, who said, I came to this meeting, Sir, with reluctance. It would have been more congenial with my feelings to have spent the evening in retirement; but impelled by a sense of duty, I appear before this audience to bear my humble testimony in favour of Wesleyan Methodism—to unite with my brethren in disproving the base calumnies which have been so plenteously heaped on its ministers, and to express my deliberate conviction of the scriptural character of those principles on which its government is based. However much I may regret the necessity of a meeting for such a purpose, I should hold myself to be a most ungrateful man, were I to shrink from the task assigned me: not that I fear for the safety of Wesleyan Methodism in the issue; she has outridden many a storm, and will outride this. The same hand that shut Noah and his family in the ark, and preserved them while tossed on that shoreless ocean, is pledged to her protection. What if it can be clearly made out, Sir, that on some points of Wesleyan

polity elucidation is requisite, and improvement might be fairly attempted—that in some solitary instances our laws may not have been administered with all that wisdom and impartiality one might wish. Is this to be urged by Dr. Warren and his co-agitors, as a justifiable ground for sowing the seeds of strife and discord in our societies, and attempting to revolutionize the whole economy of Methodism? They tell us that they love peace—that their object is to reform, to regenerate Methodism—and how do they propose to accomplish these ends? By inflammatory declamation? By slander and railing accusations? and by publicly denouncing the ministers of the gospel as tyrants? Sir, it is a libel on Methodism to say it is the system they have represented it; and it is a libel on its ministers to say of them as has been unblushingly said by a Mr. George Hughes, of Manchester, that “they were a set of pirates who had taken possession of the ship, and were flinging overboard some of the best sailors, drowning them, dashing them headlong into the waves, careless, perhaps hoping they might be carried down some Niagara falls, and lost in the sea of forgetfulness.” I know the ministers of the gospel have their weaknesses and their failings, for they are men; nor would I defend those weaknesses, or be the apologist of those failings. But I should be sorry to trumpet them forth to the world from the house top, I would rather be the man who should cast over them the mantle of love. There are those, Sir, and I envy them not their feelings, who carry about with them their pencil and sketch book, and in the social circle and the pastoral visit, in the public ministry and private walk, they watch with peculiar anxiety for some strange admixture of light and shade, for some unhappy moment favourable to their purpose, when they may catch with effect the blemishes and defects of the ambassadors of Christ; and then they touch and retouch the picture till they have fashioned it to their minds, and shaded it to their tastes, and they would fain persuade us it is a faithful likeness of the Methodist preacher. The brow is beclouded with care, the countenance is distorted, every feature is made to remind us of tyranny, selfishness, and low cunning; and the whole is shaded in colours so dark that we turn from it with disgust to look on the living forms we love, and to recal to our recollection the features of departed worth, where genius shone out brilliantly, mingled with pure benevolence and elevated piety; and we find it is a *caricature*, and not a likeness. And yet, Sir, strange to tell, some of the professed reformers of Methodism delight in exhibiting this caricature to the public gaze; and amidst the shouts and laughter of the worlding and the sceptic they cry, “Behold a portrait of the Methodist preacher.” And is it thus, Sir, that the men whose memories we cherish with fondness, and the living fathers of our Israel, are to be consigned to infamy by the pen of slander and the tongue of defamation? No! their witness is in heaven, and their record is on high; they live, and they will continue to live in the affections of that church in which it has been their honour and happiness to minister in holy things. Allow me a few passing remarks, Sir, on the

placards by which Dr. Warren's meeting was convened. It was there announced, if my memory serves me right, that the purport of the meeting was to state the principles, object, and progress of the "*Association*." If I may judge of its object from the spirit and speeches of its advocates on that occasion, I should strongly suspect it was nothing less than the utter overthrow of *Wesleyan* Methodism, for the purpose of erecting some other *ism* on its ruins, what that *ism* may be, will be matter for future deliberation; for I much doubt if the Doctor and his partisans are agreed on any point beyond the wreck of the old ship. Perhaps Mr. Hughes' declaration, which I will quote, may furnish some proof that I have not mistaken the object of the "Central Committee." "In this cause they were ready to meet all opponents, and if such were then present, they would hear them in defence of that *system* which he believed was *corrupt, unscriptural*, and contrary to the practice of the primitive churches." And yet, Sir, this same Mr. Hughes, with an admirable consistency, told the meeting that "they wished not to destroy, but to build up." Leaving this gentleman to reconcile to his conscience, the work of "building up," a system which he has pronounced to be "corrupt" and "unscriptural," I pass on to remark that the character of that meeting was anything but Wesleyan. It was but fair to hope, as Old Methodism was to be brought to the bar, and her preachers tried as "tyrants" and "pirates," that they would have an unprejudiced jury, and especially as Dr. Warren, and the orators in his train, were engaged to plead against them. It is true the placards stated that members of the Methodist societies would be admitted by showing their tickets, but it is true also that they *did not* state that none but such would be admitted, and equally true, as remarked by the editor of the *Mercury*, that "There were members of (most, if not) all denominations present, especially those of the New Connexion;" and he might have added, men who claim no union with any denomination, and but few Wesleyan Methodists. Now Sir, though I respect the rights of conscience, and quarrel with no man for differing with me on points of church government, I do most strongly demur against Wesleyan Methodism being arraigned before such a court, and tried by such a jury, without one of her friends being allowed the privilege of speaking in her defence. What Englishman would ever have thought of having the British Constitution, with King, Lords and Commons, tried by the Autocrat of Russia, the revolutionists of France, or the republicans of America? men whose previously formed opinions on civil government would utterly unfit them for the work of impartial jurors. In turning to the report of Dr. Warren's meeting, I am reminded of a published resolution, passed by the Hanley Leaders, without a hand being lifted up against it—appointing a public prayer meeting to be held in the chapel, while the Doctor and his partisans were lecturing in another place, and resolving to use their influence in preventing the consequences of his proceedings. This resolution does the leaders credit, it shows them to be men who prefer peace to strife, and prayer rather than reviling. Mr.

Wallace attempted to analyse it with something which looked like small wit, but it was so very small, that one might have smiled with contempt, had not pity for the man awakened other feelings. The report states that he commented upon the hand-bill with "keen satire," but by some strange mishap, the word "keen" must have slipped in as a substitute for the word *dull*, for the satire was dull enough indeed. The poor man laboured hard, and shewed us what he would have done if he could—but it was his misfortune, and not his fault, that nature had denied him a power equal to his wishes. That resolution, Sir, will stand the lashings of a thousand such satirists. I must now turn to one of Mr. Thompson's numerous "facts," on which he has ventured to "risk the merits of their cause." But really, Sir, when one comes to examine into their character, it seems as though this gentleman by some strange obliquity of mind, had utterly mistaken assertion for fact, and wished us to understand that it was a distinction without a difference. He stated to the meeting that the President of Conference had sent down a "gagging letter," directing the preacher "to stop all discussion at the quarterly meetings," and if there should be a determined person who could not be silenced, he must "vacate the chair, and then," added the President, "you will act according to the constitution of Methodism." The object of this statement is too obvious to need any comment from me. It is part and parcel of that wholesale plan of defamation which the association has unhappily too liberally patronized. To those who know the character of Mr. Taylor, it is scarcely necessary to say that this statement is not true. But as it has been publicly made and freely circulated, and as it is one of Mr. Thompson's series of facts which "could not be overturned," it is but right, Sir, that we should offer to this meeting what I believe will be deemed by the most sceptical, satisfactory proof that the statement is an utter falsehood. I hold in my hand the President's letter, and with your permission will read it, and then leave this meeting to judge how far Mr. Thompson's "facts" are to be relied on. [Here Mr. Powell read the letter, which was listened to with great attention, and at the close loudly cheered. The Chairman stated that any member of the Wesleyan society might have an opportunity of reading the letter, who would step into the vestry at the close of the meeting.] Mr. Powell resumed—And this, Sir, is Mr. Thompson's gagging letter; but I defy that gentleman, with all his ingenuity, to torture one sentence of the epistle into "gagging;" he may try his hand at the advice given to the superintendent, to resist the attempt, (should any be made,) to force the "Resolutions" and "Propositions" of the "Central Committee" upon the quarterly meeting; but I contend, Sir, that this advice is dictated by sound wisdom. It is obvious that those resolutions are utterly unconstitutional, and that their aim (if they have any definite aim) is the entire overthrow of those principles on which the Wesleyan polity is based. They aim at subversion, and their weapons are agitation and starvation. I do not hesitate to say, Sir, that the superintendent who should suffer those resolutions to be forced on a quarterly meeting for



discussion, and adoption, would be a traitor to Wesleyan Methodism—but, Sir, we have not a word in this letter about “stopping all discussion”—not a word about “vacating the chair”—nor a word about such a procedure being “according to the constitution of Methodism.” The letter has special reference to the inflammatory resolutions of the Manchester Association, and advises the superintendent to give the disaffected members of our society an opportunity of conversing with him on the subject, and of furnishing such explanations as may be needed or required; and concludes by recommending the utmost pastoral attention and fervent prayer to God for the supply of his Spirit. Permit me to direct your attention, and that of the meeting, to the wonderful discovery of Dr. Warren, that the Methodists have actually not had a constitution since the year 1795, and to the grave charge the Doctor has ventured to found upon this discovery. Prior to the Doctor’s rising, Mr. Hughes alluded to this “discovery,” and modestly told the meeting that the main object of the Association was to gain a constitution for the Wesleyan Methodists, as at present it “did not possess the vestige of one—all was lost in the dead sea.” And no doubt this gentleman was prepared kindly to aid the Association in this benevolent undertaking, and to throw his stock of legislative knowledge into the common fund, so that we may expect, ere long, to have a constitution manufactured for Wesleyan Methodism, which will be the wonder (not the admiration) of succeeding ages. There is an unhappy propensity in some men to be perpetually starting from the humble sphere in which they were designed to move, and in their vaunting efforts to achieve some mighty undertaking, they seldom fail to furnish ample proof of their incapacity for the task, and sink again to their original level, mortified and disappointed. This same Mr. Hughes, who told the meeting that Methodism had no constitution, distinctly stated in the same speech that “they (the Association) wanted the *laws clearly stated—power accurately defined—and whatever was mystical explained.*” So then it seems, Sir, though we have no constitution, we have laws, and a power growing out of those laws: and what is more surprising still, the association which professes to believe that we have not the vestige of a constitution, has avowed, by one of its accredited agents, that its simple object is to have “*the laws clearly stated*”—not altered—“*power accurately defined*”—not restricted—and as there is something like obscurity hanging about the framework of our—not constitution, for that is gone, but—laws and regulations, a little *illumination* is requisite, that what is mystical may be explained. And is this, after all, the ultimatum of the associations’ hopes and wishes? If so their conduct is passing strange. The charge, as I understand it, amounts to this—To render a law, binding in Methodism, it is necessary, according to the Deed of Declaration, that it should be entered and written in the Journals of Conference; but Dr. Warren has discovered that neither the Plan of Pacification, passed in 1795, nor the Concessions of 1797, are so entered; therefore, he says, “The Wesleyan Methodists have not had a constitution since 1795.” Nor is this the

only conclusion to which the Doctor has arrived. He has solemnly assured the public that the pretended concessions of 1797 have "turned out to be a mere figment, a delusion, an ignis fatuus, to decoy the people over bog and ditch." That the "printed copies were sent among the people to keep them quiet; and thus had the solemn deception succeeded, until they felt that they were denied the rights which it professed to give." If, then, the Doctor's statements are true, and his opinions correct, the case stands thus:—We have had no constitution since 1795. The pretended deed of pacification was a solemn mockery practised upon a confiding people by their ministers. And lastly, the people have been denied the rights which it professed to give. The latter part of the charge may be dismissed in a few words. As the Doctor has not condescended to offer any evidence in support of his statement, but simply rested it on his own assertion, he cannot complain if those who differ from him, deem it enough to assert, with equal confidence, that his assumption is a false one, and challenge him to prove that the Wesleyan ministers have ever *denied* to their people those rights which were conceded by the deed of pacification, as interpreted by any enlightened and unprejudiced man. It is a little singular that the Doctor should have told the meeting so gravely that we have had *no constitution* since 1795. As Methodism, with its laws and usages, existed long before that period, it is but fair to presume that it had a constitution before the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797 were framed. Nor will it follow, if the Doctor could, by possibility, prove that these—which are acknowledged to be part and parcel of the constitution—were "lost in the dead sea,"—that they have dragged the other parts after them, and that the whole lies engulfed there. But simply that instead of having the constitution with the liberal concessions of 1795 and 1797 forming an integral part, we have only the constitution as it existed before that period. But still, Sir, there is the trickery, the deceit, the solemn mockery, practised on the Methodists by their ministers. And who are the men who stand arraigned before the bar of the Methodist public, on this solemn charge? Why, Sir, among the names of those who were in Conference, and aided in framing the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797, I find the names of a Mather, a Pawson, a Coke, a Benson, a Moore, a Clark, and others who were eminent alike for their wisdom and piety—men who were burning and shining lights, and whose names shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Most of them have entered into their Father's house, and live unaffected by the poisoned breast of slander, and uninjured by the tongue of calumny. And who is their accuser? This unenviable task, Sir, Dr. Warren has undertaken; and the evidence which he adduces in support of his charge, is the absence of the laws of pacification from the Journals of Conference. For the sake of argument I will admit what Dr. Warren states to be the fact—that the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797, are not in the written Journals; but I deny that this proves the charge which he has ventured to make. Nay, Sir, I contend that the whole history of Method-



discussion, and adoption, would be a traitor to Wesleyan Methodism—but, Sir, we have not a word in this letter about “stopping all discussion”—not a word about “vacating the chair”—nor a word about such a procedure being “according to the constitution of Methodism.” The letter has special reference to the inflammatory resolutions of the Manchester Association, and advises the superintendent to give the disaffected members of our society an opportunity of conversing with him on the subject, and of furnishing such explanations as may be needed or required; and concludes by recommending the utmost pastoral attention and fervent prayer to God for the supply of his Spirit. Permit me to direct your attention, and that of the meeting, to the wonderful discovery of Dr. Warren, that the Methodists have actually not had a constitution since the year 1795, and to the grave charge the Doctor has ventured to found upon this discovery. Prior to the Doctor’s rising, Mr. Hughes alluded to this “discovery,” and modestly told the meeting that the main object of the Association was to gain a constitution for the Wesleyan Methodists, as at present it “did not possess the vestige of one—all was lost in the dead sea.” And no doubt this gentleman was prepared kindly to aid the Association in this benevolent undertaking, and to throw his stock of legislative knowledge into the common fund, so that we may expect, ere long, to have a constitution manufactured for Wesleyan Methodism, which will be the wonder (not the admiration) of succeeding ages. There is an unhappy propensity in some men to be perpetually starting from the humble sphere in which they were designed to move, and in their vaunting efforts to achieve some mighty undertaking, they seldom fail to furnish ample proof of their incapacity for the task, and sink again to their original level, mortified and disappointed. This same Mr. Hughes, who told the meeting that Methodism had no constitution, distinctly stated in the same speech that “they (the Association) wanted the *laws clearly stated—power accurately defined—and whatever was mystical explained.*” So then it seems, Sir, though we have no constitution, we have laws, and a power growing out of those laws: and what is more surprising still, the association which professes to believe that we have not the vestige of a constitution, has avowed, by one of its accredited agents, that its simple object is to have “*the laws clearly stated*”—not altered—“*power accurately defined*”—not restricted—and as there is something like obscurity hanging about the frame-work of our—not constitution, for that is gone, but—laws and regulations, a little *illumination* is requisite, that what is mystical may be explained. And is this, after all, the ultimatum of the associations’ hopes and wishes? If so their conduct is passing strange. The charge, as I understand it, amounts to this—To render a law, binding in Methodism, it is necessary, according to the Deed of Declaration, that it should be entered and written in the Journals of Conference; but Dr. Warren has discovered that neither the Plan of Pacification, passed in 1795, nor the Concessions of 1797, are so entered; therefore, he says, “The Wesleyan Methodists have not had a constitution since 1795.” Nor is this the

only conclusion to which the Doctor has arrived. He has solemnly assured the public that the pretended concessions of 1797 have "turned out to be a mere figment, a delusion, an ignis fatuus, to decoy the people over bog and ditch." That the "printed copies were sent among the people to keep them quiet; and thus had the solemn deception succeeded, until they felt that they were denied the rights which it professed to give." If, then, the Doctor's statements are true, and his opinions correct, the case stands thus:—We have had no constitution since 1795. The pretended deed of pacification was a solemn mockery practised upon a confiding people by their ministers. And lastly, the people have been denied the rights which it professed to give. The latter part of the charge may be dismissed in a few words. As the Doctor has not condescended to offer any evidence in support of his statement, but simply rested it on his own assertion, he cannot complain if those who differ from him, deem it enough to assert, with equal confidence, that his assumption is a false one, and challenge him to prove that the Wesleyan ministers have ever *denied* to their people those rights which were conceded by the deed of pacification, as interpreted by any enlightened and unprejudiced man. It is a little singular that the Doctor should have told the meeting so gravely that we have had *no constitution* since 1795. As Methodism, with its laws and usages, existed long before that period, it is but fair to presume that it had a constitution before the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797 were framed. Nor will it follow, if the Doctor could, by possibility, prove that these—which are acknowledged to be part and parcel of the constitution—were "lost in the dead sea,"—that they have dragged the other parts after them, and that the whole lies engulfed there. But simply that instead of having the constitution with the liberal concessions of 1795 and 1797 forming an integral part, we have only the constitution as it existed before that period. But still, Sir, there is the trickery, the deceit, the solemn mockery, practised on the Methodists by their ministers. And who are the men who stand arraigned before the bar of the Methodist public, on this solemn charge? Why, Sir, among the names of those who were in Conference, and aided in framing the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797, I find the names of a Mather, a Pawson, a Coke, a Benson, a Moore, a Clark, and others who were eminent alike for their wisdom and piety—men who were burning and shining lights, and whose names shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Most of them have entered into their Father's house, and live unaffected by the poisoned breast of slander, and uninjured by the tongue of calumny. And who is their accuser? This unenviable task, Sir, Dr. Warren has undertaken; and the evidence which he adduces in support of his charge, is the absence of the laws of pacification from the Journals of Conference. For the sake of argument I will admit what Dr. Warren states to be the fact—that the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797, are not in the written Journals; but I deny that this proves the charge which he has ventured to make. Nay, Sir, I contend that the whole history of Method-

ism, from that day to this, furnishes abundant evidence that the accusation is false and unfounded. If the Conferences of 1795 and 1797 had conspired to deceive and mock the people, it is very natural to suppose that the secret of the conspiracy would have been in the keeping of the hundred, and that as the places of those who were removed by death were filled up by others, so the secret would be confided to them. that the whole body might be prepared to act in concert. when occasion should offer, to tell the people that they had contrived to deceive them, and that after all they had really no law of pacification. But Dr. Warren is a member of the hundred. And how happens it that he has kept this astounding fact a secret till now? Perhaps he will tell us he did not know of it before I believe him, Sir! But *how* and *why* the keepers of this secret have contrived to keep it from him I do not know, except it be that there was no secret to keep, and consequently none to communicate.

Mr. Pinder—I also am a member of the hundred, and knew nothing of the law of pacification being omitted to be entered in the Journal, but always considered it with my brethren to be the law of Methodism, and as such have ever acted upon it.

Mr. Powell—Yes, Sir, and I contend that the laws referred to were drawn up and enacted with an integrity of purpose, and a purity of intention worthy of the men who framed them, and the Conference by whom they were adopted. They were published in the minutes, the printed records of Conference bearing the imprint of their printer, and the signature of their president and secretary; and from that day to this they have been continued to be published by authority of Conference, without change or mutilation. And there can be no doubt that the original manuscript deed of pacification, as read and published in Conference, was handed to the printer, and intended to be what it has been and is—the law of Methodism. And though according to Dr. Warren's showing, there is an informality about it, that arises, in my opinion, from the negligence of the Conference officer, whose business it was to enter it on the Journal. But, Sir, it has been as really and truly acted upon in Methodism, as though it were written there in letters of gold.

Mr. Hancock—How do you account for it that the concessions of 1797 are not on the Journal?

Mr. Powell—Precisely as I account for the absence of the deed of 1795—not from the treachery of Conference, but from the negligence of the secretary. It has been published too in our class books, that every leader, as an officer, in Methodism, and every section of the Methodist church, might know it as law. It has been introduced by direction of Conference into our chapel deeds, those legal instruments by which the chapel property is secured to the Connexion, and the trustees, on the authority of those deeds, framed, according to the wishes of Conference, claim the rights and privileges of that law. Mr. Watson, in his affectionate address, has unhesitatingly avowed that the deed of 1795, and the concessions of 1797, are parts of the constitution of Methodism, and ought to be scrupulously acted upon, according to their

legitimate interpretation, both by preachers and people. The preachers in London and its vicinity, in their late declaration, have most distinctly recognized the law of pacification, and declared that the privileges of the people are as sacred to them as the rights of the ministerial office. The Conference too have invariably recognized it as the law of Methodism, and in all their legislations have carefully avoided any infringement upon its principle. And whenever an accusation has been made against a preacher, a number of preachers, or the Conference collectively—as having violated the laws of pacification—the case has invariably been met on the part of the Conference, by an appeal to those laws, and whatever difference there may have been in expounding some of them, no attempt has ever been made to set them aside, by pleading their absence from the written journal.

Mr. Hancock—Have the laws of pacification in all cases been fairly acted upon?

Mr. Powell—Whether that question be answered in the negative or the affirmative, it will not at all affect my argument. I am not contending that the laws of pacification have never been infringed upon, but that Conference has never scrupled in avowing them to be the laws of Methodism, and never refused to act upon them. Those laws were honestly passed, and I believe it has been the wish of Conference that they should be faithfully kept. Though the Leeds case was discussed for six days, not a single preacher took exception to the law on which it was argued. Certainly not Dr. Warren. for he stated that *There was a tendency to democracy, and he regretted it—he thought all had been ceded in 1795 and 1797, that could be ceded with safety.* In the late trial, when Mr. Newton and others were dragged before the Court of Chancery by the Doctor, who grounded his case on the deed of pacification, no demur was raised against the law, nor any objection taken to his counsel pleading from the printed records, though the Doctor discovered it was not in the written Journal. And after all this, are we to be told that the law of pacification is not the law of Methodism? That the preachers never intended it should be, but that a solemn mockery has been practised upon us by our ministers, who have been traitors to the church instead of the guardians of its rights and privileges! And this for no other reason but that the laws referred to are not to be found in the Journals of Conference. If some fifty years hence the archives of our country should be searched in vain for the engrossed copy of the Reform Bill, the man might with just as much propriety return from his careful but fruitless examination, to publish through the length and breadth of the land that the people of Britain had no constitution. That the Reform Bill was a solemn mockery. That it was not the law of the land, and that the King, who had acted the part of a traitor to his people, never intended it should be, and had either prevented it being lodged among the public records, or taken care afterwards to destroy it. Would it not be said, in reply to such an accusation,—in contradiction to such a false assumption, that the Reform Bill had been published by the King's printer, and circulated throughout the land! that

its enfranchising and disfranchising clauses had been acted upon? that a new constituency had been created by it, who enjoyed their privileges undisputed; and that the king had done all that a sovereign could do, to carry out its principles, and secure to the people the undisturbed enjoyment of its rights. That its absence from the archives, with such facts before the nation, though it might prove the negligence of that officer whose business it was to lodge it there, would never prove that the king was a traitor, and that the people had no constitution. I most seriously fear there is a spirit abroad which aims at degrading the ministerial office. I wish not to be understood as making any invidious allusions to persons present in this meeting; but I repeat my conviction that there is a conspiracy abroad to prostrate the office and the character of the ministry in the dust, that the worldling may scoff as he passes by, and the infidel shout with malignant triumph, "Aha so would we have it." I will quote to you on this point an opinion in which I fully concur, not of a Methodist preacher, or it perhaps would be received by some with distrust, but of a man of acknowledged talent and liberality—it is the opinion, Sir, of Mr. James, of Birmingham, and with your permission I will read it:—

"It is my decided conviction that in many of our churches the pastor is pressed far below his just level—he is considered merely in the light of a speaking brother—he has no official distinction or authority—he may flatter like a sycophant—he may beg like a servant—he may woo like a lover, but he is not permitted to enjoin like a ruler. His opinion is received with no deference—his person treated with no respect, and in the presence of some of his lay tyrants, if he say anything at all, it must be somewhat similar to the ancient soothsayers, for he is only permitted to creep and mutter from the dust. The tyranny of a minister has some shadow of excuse in the circumstance of his being invested with an office, the duties of which are not defined with accuracy; but the tyranny of a church over their pastor is without an apology, for they have no office, and therefore no power."

Sir, Methodism is destined to live unchanged in its principles, and unimpaired in its energies, to enlighten and bless the world when its misguided opponents have passed into eternity, and their efforts to change its character are utterly forgotten. But should they flatter themselves they can succeed in overthrowing its noble structure, what do they propose to give us in its stead? Let them reflect in their rage for change, and in their unrelenting efforts to destroy, that it is easier to pull down a palace than to build a pig sty.

---

ERRATA.—Page 6, lines 44, 45, for "moral and scriptural kind, and has been used by them chiefly to effect moral and scriptural changes;" read, "moral and spiritual kind, and has been used by them chiefly to effect moral and spiritual changes." Page 7, line 23, for "whenever the office is formed," read "wherever the office is found." Page 8, line 13, for "despotic menaces," read "despotic measures."